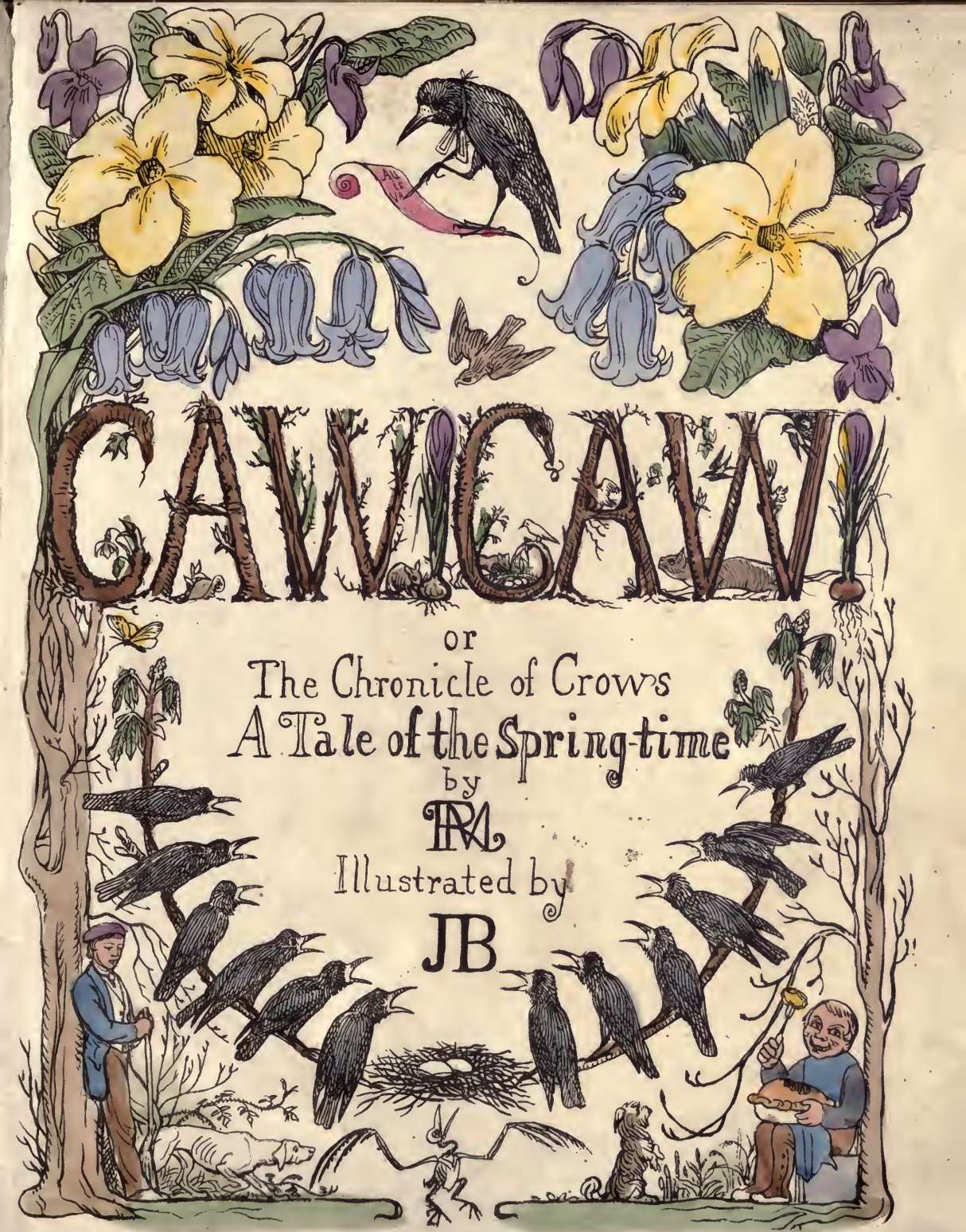
Same
2 vol in 1
150

For dear Johnie from Chattie,
and Mary. —

John F. Coats
4 Crown Gardens
Glasgow W2

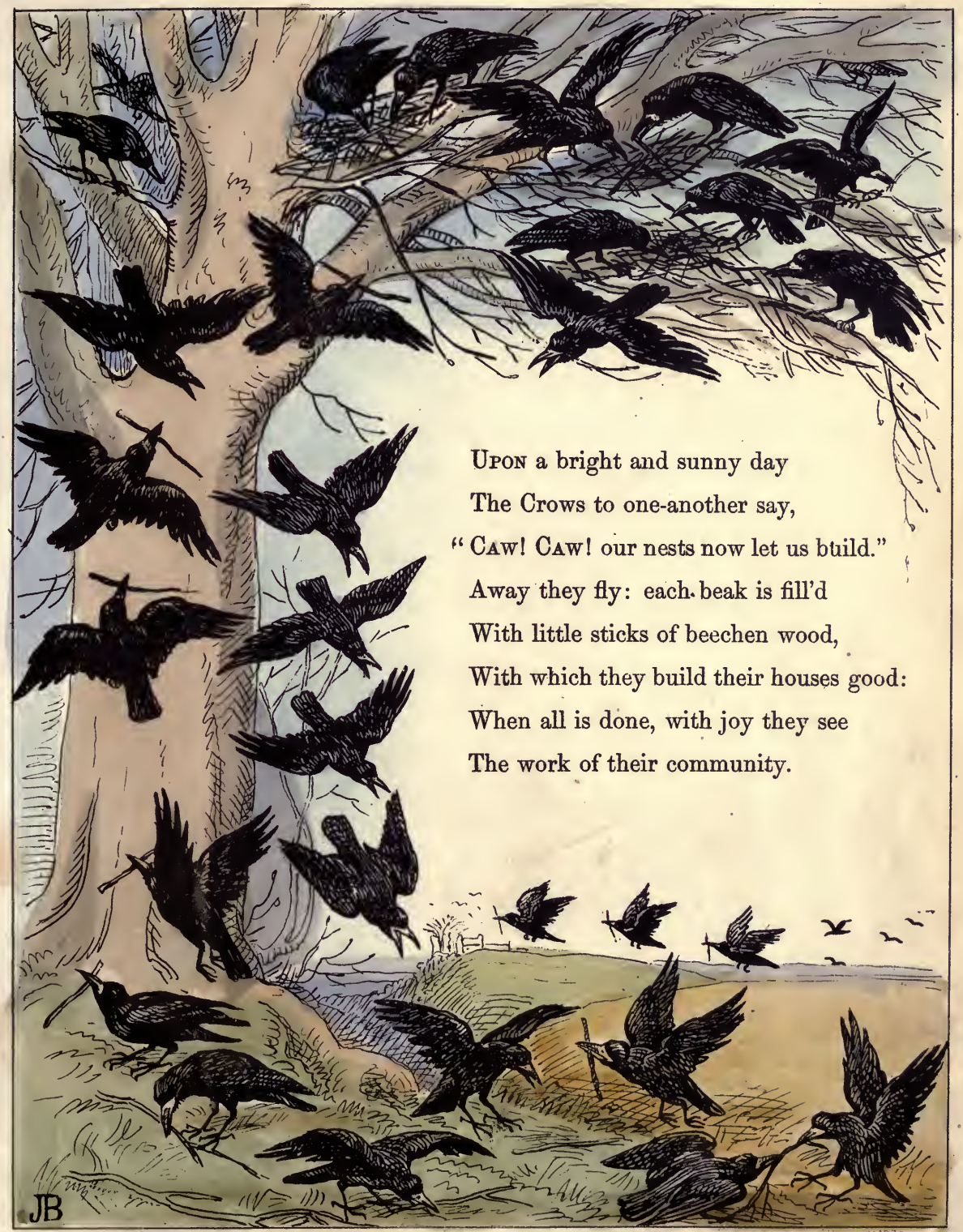
7/25



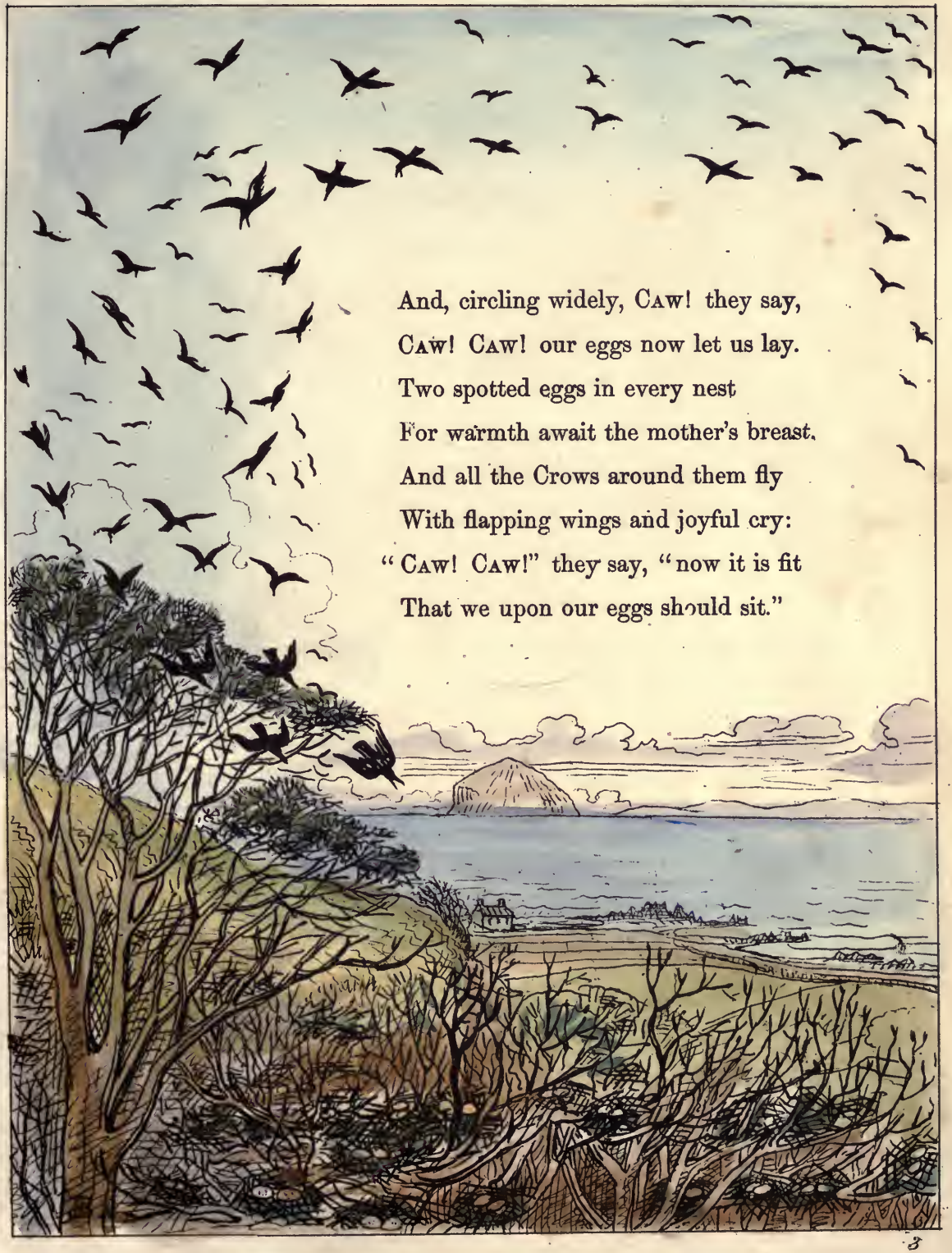
LONDON; GRANT & GRIFFITH. SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERY & HARRIS:
THE CORNER OF ST PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

In the merry spring time, thus says my song,
When the sun shines bright and the days grow long,
And the crocuses brilliant, in purple and gold,
Bloom in the gardens in numbers untold;
When in the fields the grass grows green,
And a few early lambs are seen;
When daffodils in gaudy gowns
Look gay upon the verdant downs,
And fair spring flowers of each degree
In every sheltered nook you see,

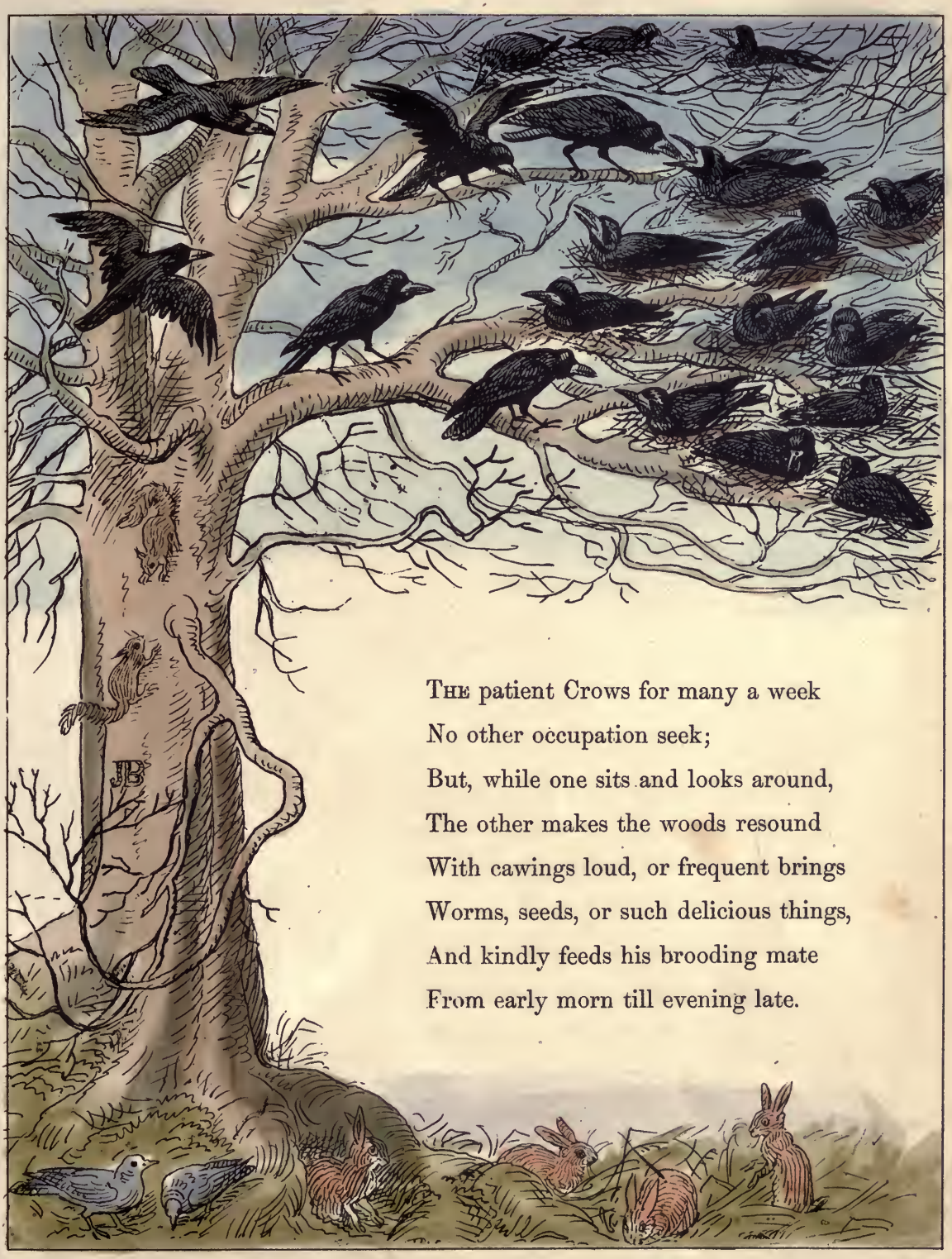
JB



Upon a bright and sunny day
The Crows to one-another say,
"Caw! Caw! our nests now let us build."
Away they fly: each beak is fill'd
With little sticks of beechen wood,
With which they build their houses good:
When all is done, with joy they see
The work of their community.



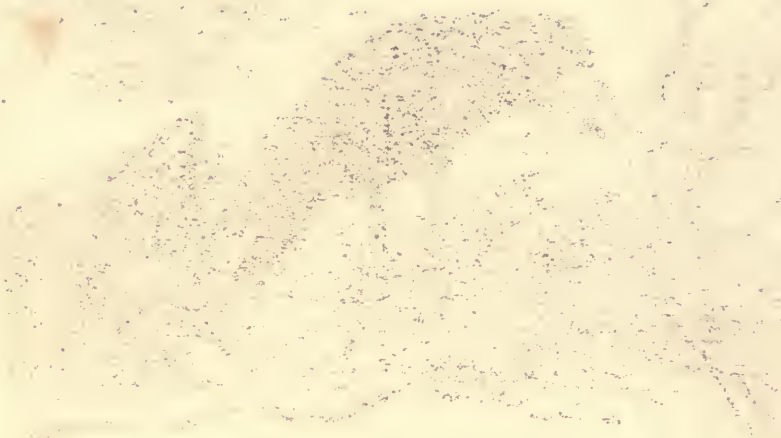
And, circling widely, CAW! they say,
CAW! CAW! our eggs now let us lay.
Two spotted eggs in every nest
For warmth await the mother's breast.
And all the Crows around them fly
With flapping wings and joyful cry:
"CAW! CAW!" they say, "now it is fit
That we upon our eggs should sit."



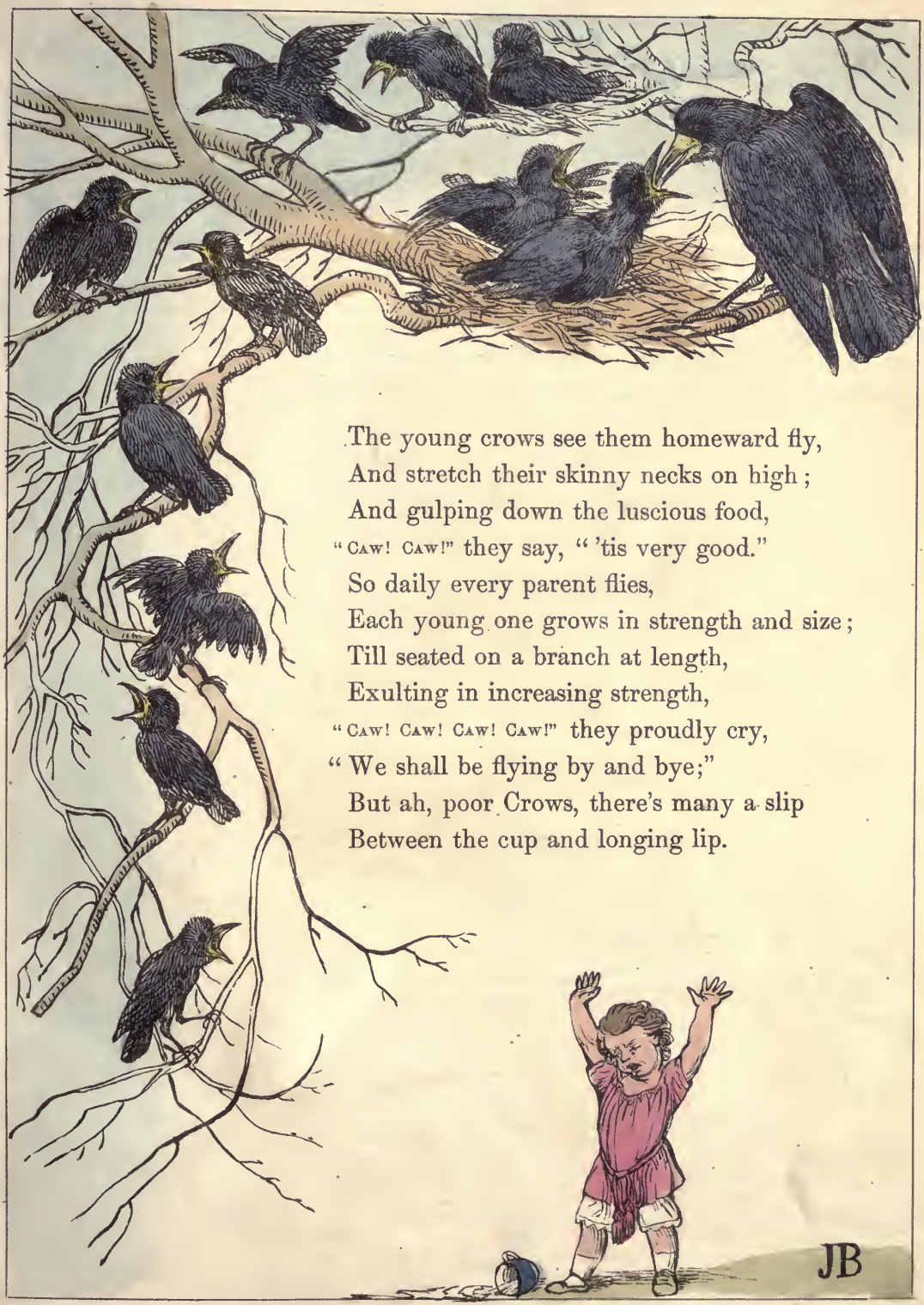
THE patient Crows for many a week
No other occupation seek;
But, while one sits and looks around,
The other makes the woods resound
With cawings loud, or frequent brings
Worms, seeds, or such delicious things,
And kindly feeds his brooding mate
From early morn till evening late.

G 820 STAMPS

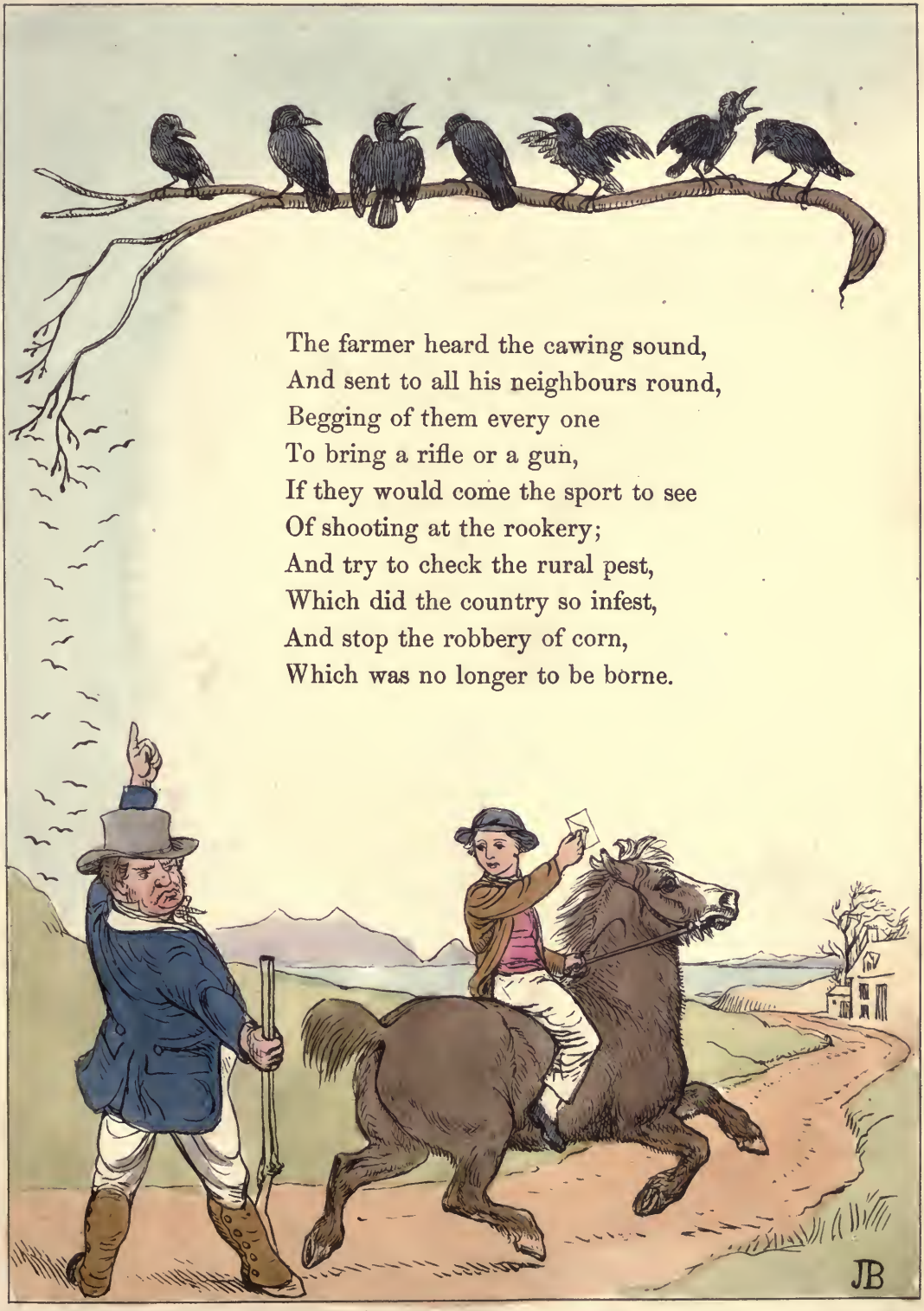
Till, to reward their anxious care,
A gentle sound the parents' hear
Of tapping from within the shell:
This sound doth please the mother well,
And, fondly helping with her bill,
She hears the voices weak and shrill.
"CAW! CAW!" the downy young ones say,
"How lovely is this peep of day,
Oh what a glorious sight is this,
There can be nothing here but bliss."
"CAW! CAW!" replies the mother crow,
"There is no joy unmixed with woe."



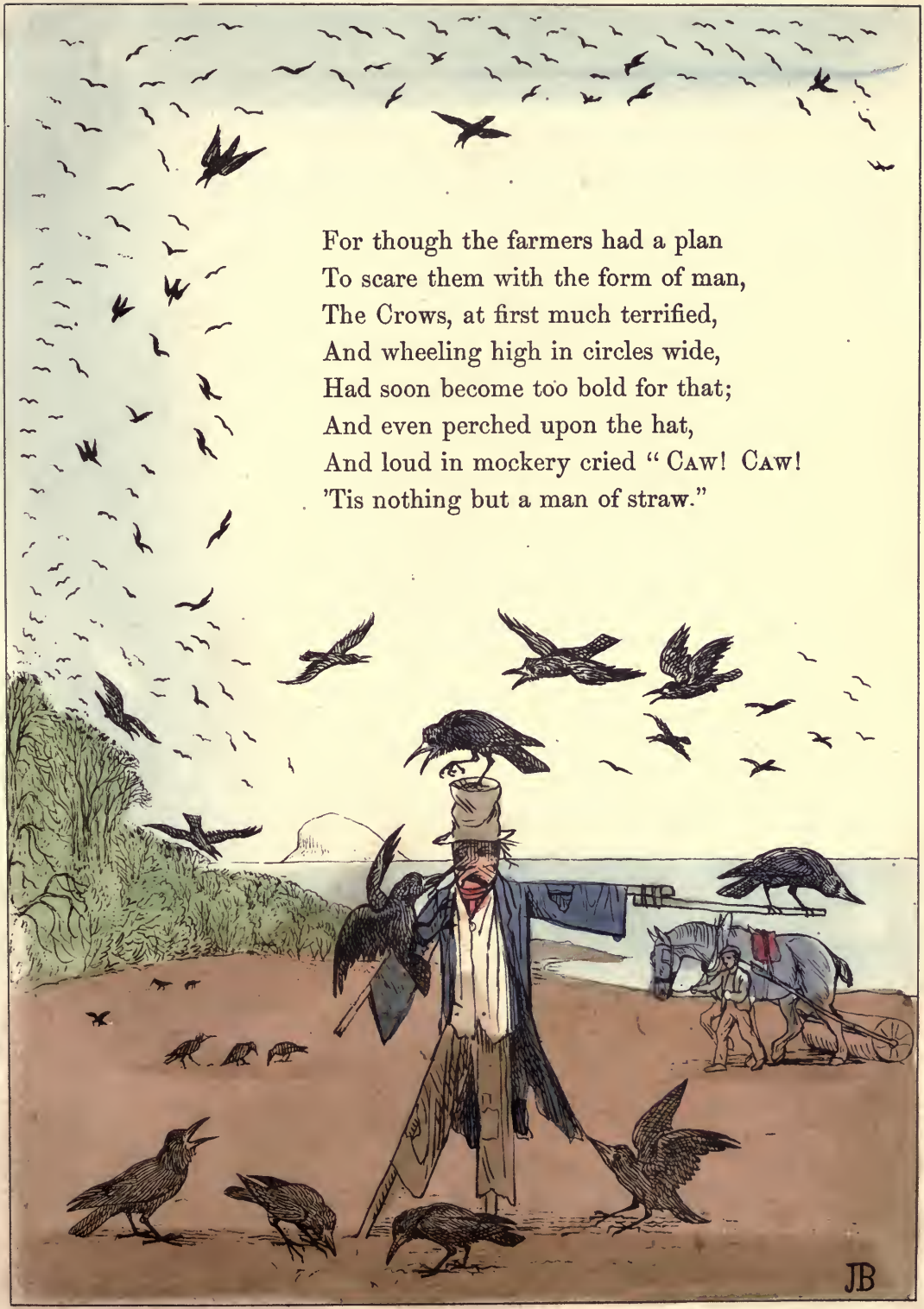
The father crows with tender heart
In the parental cares take part—
"Caw! Caw!" they say, "for food we'll fly
Before our young ones hungry cry."
In course direct they fly afar
To where the ploughmen lab'ring are,
And, seeking in the upturn'd soil,
They meet with many a wormy spoil;
And, filling their capacious beak,
Straightway their forest homes they seek.



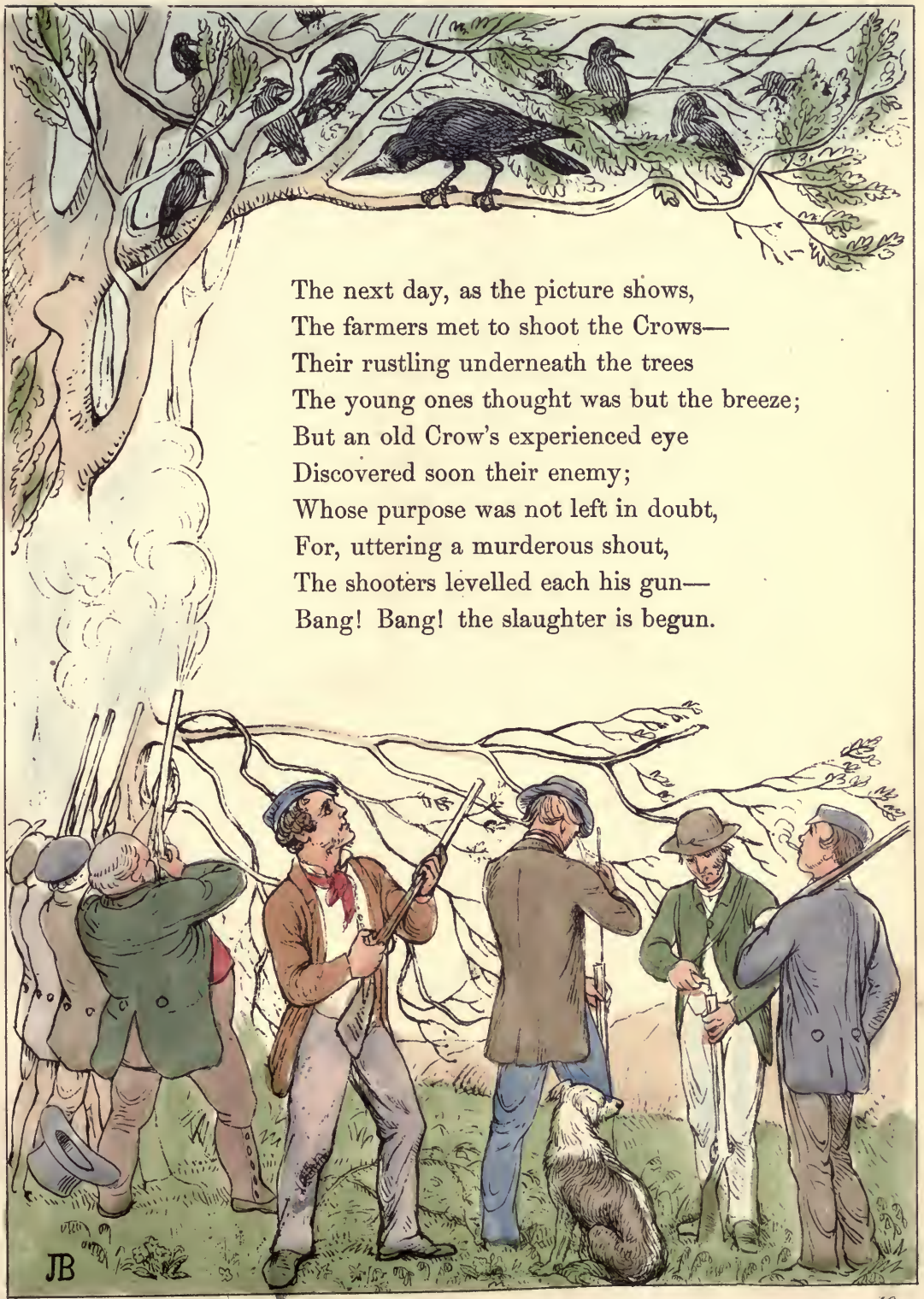
The young crows see them homeward fly,
And stretch their skinny necks on high;
And gulping down the luscious food,
"CAW! CAW!" they say, "'tis very good."
So daily every parent flies,
Each young one grows in strength and size;
Till seated on a branch at length,
Exulting in increasing strength,
"CAW! CAW! CAW! CAW!" they proudly cry,
"We shall be flying by and bye;"
But ah, poor Crows, there's many a slip
Between the cup and longing lip.



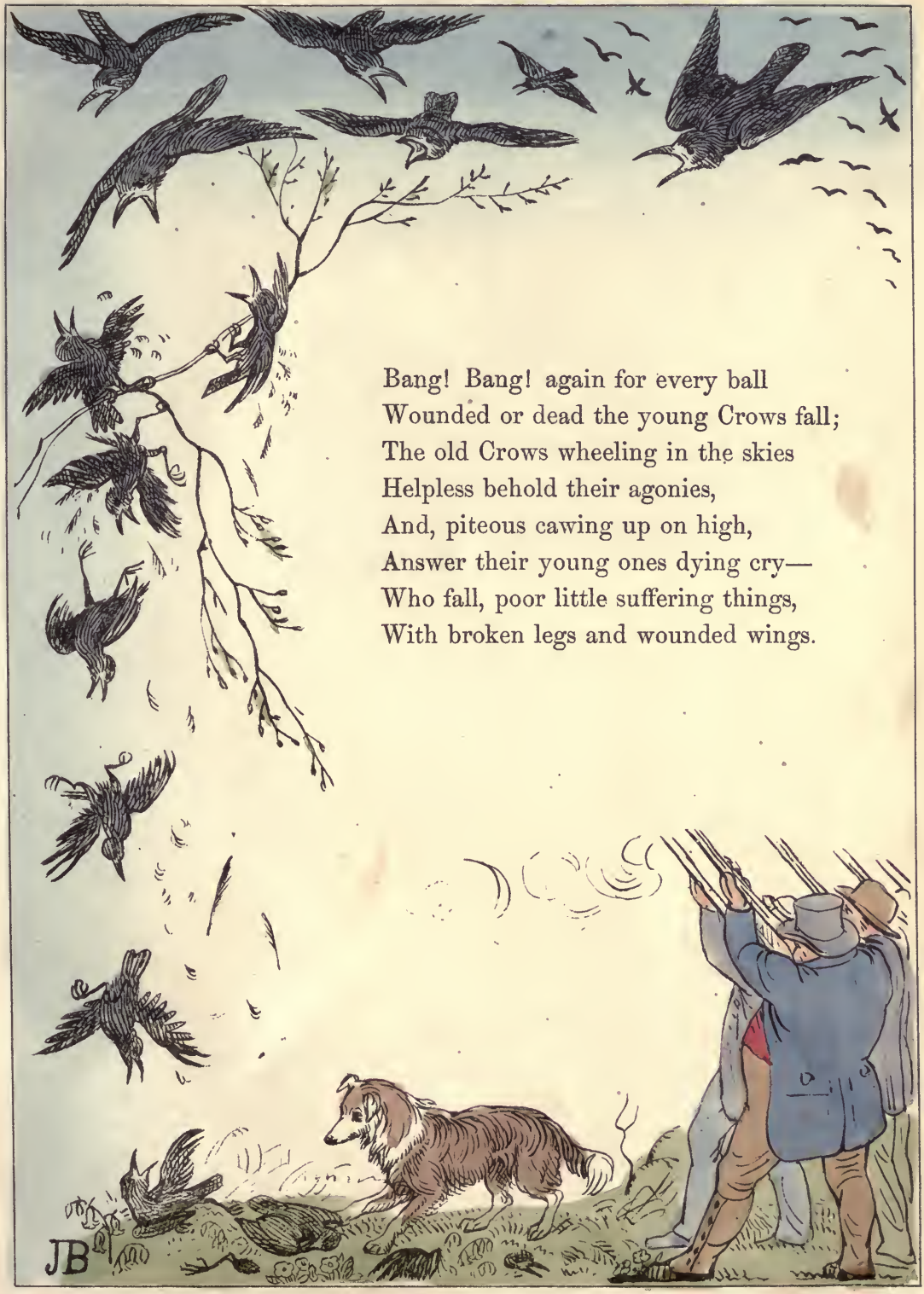
The farmer heard the cawing sound,
And sent to all his neighbours round,
Begging of them every one
To bring a rifle or a gun,
If they would come the sport to see
Of shooting at the rookery;
And try to check the rural pest,
Which did the country so infest,
And stop the robbery of corn,
Which was no longer to be borne.



For though the farmers had a plan
To scare them with the form of man,
The Crows, at first much terrified,
And wheeling high in circles wide,
Had soon become too bold for that;
And even perched upon the hat,
And loud in mockery cried "CAW! CAW!
'Tis nothing but a man of straw."

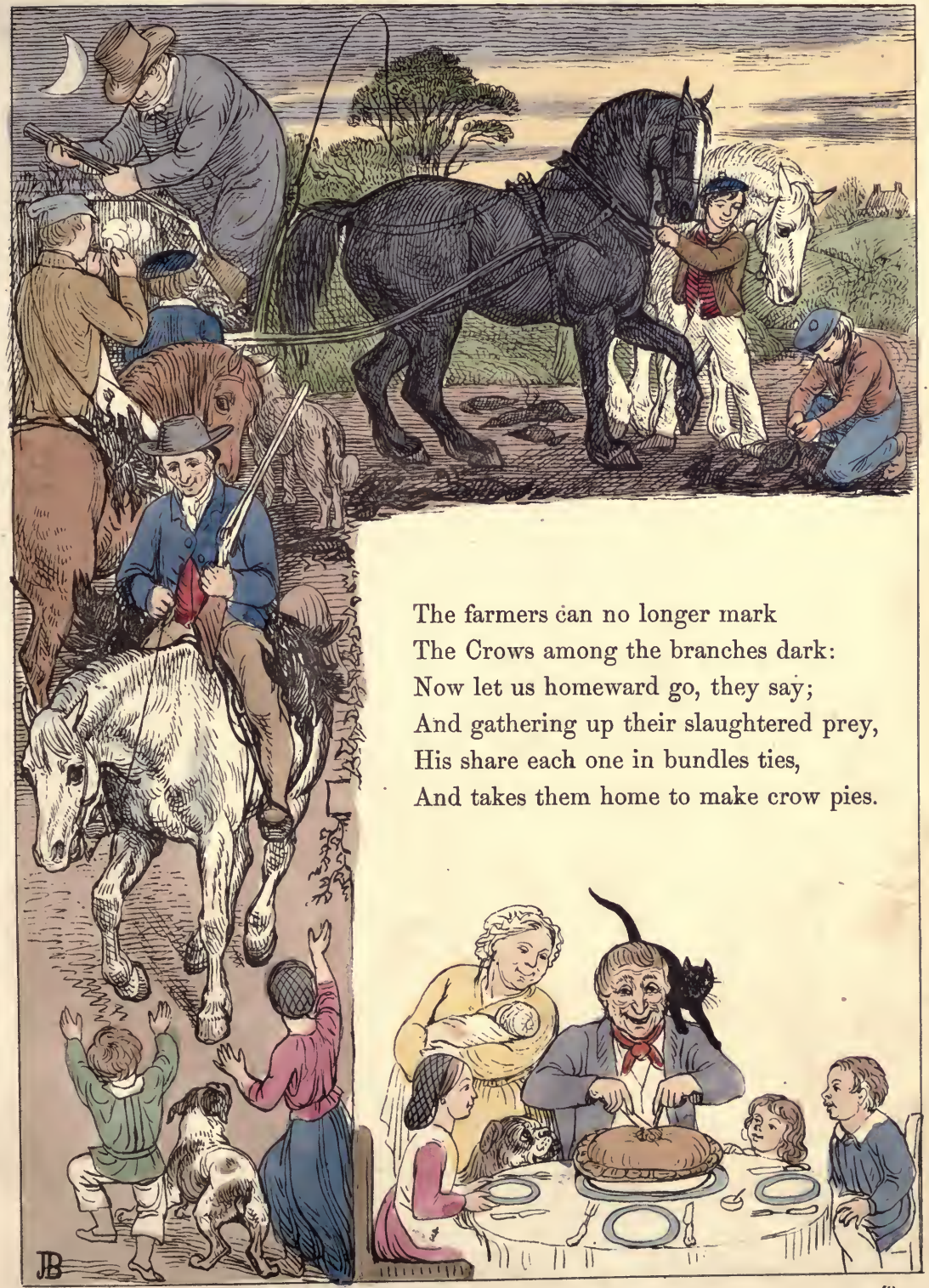


The next day, as the picture shows,
The farmers met to shoot the Crows—
Their rustling underneath the trees
The young ones thought was but the breeze;
But an old Crow's experienced eye
Discovered soon their enemy;
Whose purpose was not left in doubt,
For, uttering a murderous shout,
The shooters levelled each his gun—
Bang! Bang! the slaughter is begun.



Bang! Bang! again for every ball
Wounded or dead the young Crows fall;
The old Crows wheeling in the skies
Helpless behold their agonies,
And, piteous cawing up on high,
Answer their young ones dying cry—
Who fall, poor little suffering things,
With broken legs and wounded wings.

At last the sun begins to sink,
And soon is on the very brink
Of setting in the quiet sea;
The ploughing horses leave the lea,
The weary workman homeward goes
Thinking of supper and repose;
And darkness closes o'er the scene,
Where late the murderous sport had been:
The moon, with pale and pitying looks,
Shines on the slaughter-field of rooks:
The owlets hoot, from ivy bower,
In the grey embattled tower—
"Tuwit, tuwit, towhoo!" they say,
And echoing through the ruins grey,
The sound disturbs the daily sleep
Of bats who dwell in dungeon keep,
Who 'mong the ruins nightly flit,
And under aged arches sit.



The farmers can no longer mark
The Crows among the branches dark:
Now let us homeward go, they say;
And gathering up their slaughtered prey,
His share each one in bundles ties,
And takes them home to make crow pies.

Of Crows who were not shot, the few
Far to the distant mountains flew,
But found not there the expected rest:
A longing seized them for their nest,
"CAW! CAW!" with one accord they cry,
"Let us directly homeward fly."

So in undeviating track,
Like column huge of dotted black,
Straightway their course they homeward bent,
And meditating as they went—
"CAW! CAW!" they say, "How well we know
There is no joy unmixed with woe."